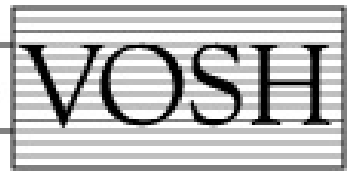


Virginia Occupational Safety and Health



VOSH PROGRAM DIRECTIVE: 12-232A

ISSUED: March 1, 1994

SUBJECT: Amendment Concerning Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms; and Redesignation

A. Purpose.

This directive consolidates existing program directives regarding Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms and transmits the above-referenced amendment to field personnel. Former VOSH Program Directive 12-232 becomes Change I and former VOSH Program Directive 12-233 becomes Change II.

This Program Directive is an internal guideline, not a statutory or regulatory rule, and is intended to provide instructions to VOSH personnel regarding internal operation of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program and is solely for the benefit of the program. This document is not subject to the Virginia Register Act or the Administrative Process Act; it does not have general application and is not being enforced as having the force of law.

B. Scope.

This directive applies VOSH-wide.

C. Action

The Assistant Commissioner, Directors and Supervisors shall assure that employers comply with the requirements of the amended standard on Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms.

D. Effective Date

Change I: February 1, 1989
Change II: September 4, 1989

E. Expiration Date

Not Applicable.

F. Background.

Change I: On November 14, 1988, the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board adopted an identical version of Federal OSHA's Amendment Concerning Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms, 29 CFR 1926.550(g), as published in the Federal Register on August 2, 1988 (53 Fed. Reg. 29116).

On September 8, 1988, Federal OSHA published in the Federal Register an Amendment Concerning Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms, 1926.550(g) (53 Fed. Reg. 29116). The amendment adds a new paragraph (g) to 1926.550 to "prohibit the use of cranes or derricks to hoist personnel except in the situation where no safe alternative is possible, and as long as the requirements for such hoisting set out in paragraph (g) are satisfied." (53 Fed. Reg. 29116).

"Since 1975, OSHA has issued four interpretations which provided for the use of crane suspended work platforms.... Despite the issuance of these guidelines, there have been persistent questions about the required equipment and procedures, and a rising toll of fatalities and injuries among hoisted employees. In particular, OSHA is concerned that those guidelines, since they are generally available only to compliance officers, are not known to employers who might be hoisting personnel. Therefore, employees might learn about the approved procedures only after an inspection or accident investigation has taken place.

OSHA determined that these administrative interpretations... have not provided adequate guidance for employers or protection for workers. OSHA initiated this rulemaking action to establish clearly the conditions under which employees on personnel platforms may be hoisted by cranes and derricks, and to insure that this information is readily available to employers." (Fed. Reg. 29116-29117).

"The hoisting of personnel occurs in construction firms classified under a broad range of four digit Standard Industrial Classification Codes (SICs). OSHA has determined that the final rule could potentially affect all firms within SICs 1541, Industrial Buildings and Warehouses; 1542, Nonresidential, not elsewhere classified; 1622, Bridge, Tunnel, and Elevated Highway Construction; 1629, Heavy Construction Not Elsewhere Classified; 1791, Steel Erection; and 1795, Demolition. There were 42,804 firms in these SICs in 1982, and OSHA estimates that the number increased to about 45,000 firms in 1987. However, a number of these firms may adopt alternative means for hoisting personnel, such as aerial lifts, once the standard is implemented.

Change II: On June 19, 1989, the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Codes Board adopted an identical version of Federal OSHA's Amendment Concerning Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms, Redesignation, 29 CFR 1926.550(g), as published in the Federal Register on April 18, 1989 (54 Fed. Reg. 15405).

On April 18, 1989, Federal OSHA published in the Federal Register an Amendment Concerning Crane or Derrick Suspended Personnel Platforms, Redesignation, 29 CFR 1926.550(g); which redesignates

§1926.550(g)(3)(i)(D) to §1926.550(g)(3)(ii)(D).

The change is made to eliminate some confusion concerning the regulatory intent of the redesignated section. Because of the location of paragraph (g)(3)(i)(D) in the "Operational Criteria" section, some employers have "mistakenly concluded that cautious operation alone would be an acceptable substitute for the installation of 'instruments and components....' By this redesignation, the Agency [Federal OSHA] will indicate clearly that the intended degree of employee protection is achieved through the cautious operation of a properly equipped crane or derrick, and not by the cautious operation of a crane or derrick lacking the required safety equipment" (54 Fed. Reg. 15405).

G. Summary.

Change I: The amendment adds a new paragraph (g) to §1926.550 to prohibit the use of cranes or derricks to hoist personnel except where no safe alternative is possible and as long as the requirements for such hoisting set out in paragraph (g) are satisfied. In addition, the amendment specifies safe operating procedures and special safety devices for cranes.

Change II: The amendment redesignates §1926.550(g)(3)(i)(D) to §1926.550(g)(3)(ii)(D). This section addresses controlled load lowering and the prohibition of free fall and "requires that cranes or derricks used to hoist personnel 'have a system or device on the power train' to ensure that employees receive the necessary protection." However, that language appears with the 'Operational Criteria' (paragraph (g)(3)(i)) rather than with the 'Instruments and Components' provisions (paragraph (g)(E)(ii)). (54 Fed. Reg. 15404).

Carol Amato
Commissioner

Attachment: None.

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